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TOPOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION

AND

HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF

PLAINFIELD,

IN HAMPSHIRE COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS,

MAY, 1834.

BY JACOB PORTER.

"Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood!"—Scott.

GREENFIELD:
PRINTED BY THOMAS PRINCE.
1834.

HISTORY OF PLAINFIELD.

SITUATION AND EXTENT.

Plainfield is a post township in the north-west corner of Hampshire county, Massachusetts, 20 miles north-west of Northampton, and 112 west of Boston. It is about 5 miles long from east to west, and about 4 wide from north to south.

BOUNDARIES.

It is bounded on the north by Hawley, east by Ashfield, both in Franklin county, south by Cummington, west by Windsor and Savoy, both in Berkshire county.

According to a survey taken by Eliphalet Darling, in 1831, by order of the General Court, the particular boundaries are as follows:—Beginning at the north-west corner, by a line running east, 19 degrees south, 1,594 rods=4 miles, 314 rods, which is the boundary between Hawley and Plainfield; thence south, 7 degrees west, 217 rods, thence south, 30 minutes east, 122 rods, thence east, 19 degrees, 20 minutes south, 85 rods, thence south, 19 degrees, 20 minutes west, 401 rods,=1 mile, 81 rods, thence south, 30 minutes east, 517 rods,=1 mile, 197 rods, the boundaries between Ashfield and Plainfield; thence west, 17 degrees south, 195 rods, thence west, 20 degrees north, 1,604 rods,=5 miles, 4 rods, the boundaries between Cummington and Plainfield; thence north, 18 degrees east, 927 rods,=2 miles, 287 rods, thence west 18 degrees north, 166 rods, the boundaries between Windsor and Plainfield; thence north, 18 degrees east, to the corner first mentioned, 320 rods,=1 mile, the boundary between Savoy and Plainfield. In conformity to a law of the commonwealth, passed March

8, 1827, a stone monument, marked with the proper initials, has been erected at every corner.

GEOLOGY.

Two distinct and well characterized strata of rocks traverse this town in a north and south direction. Mica slate extends from Ashfield about two thirds of the distance to Savoy ; talcose slate then commences and occupies the remainder of the township. These rocks are beautifully stratified; but the strata, instead of lying in their natural position, are turned up, so that their inclination is perpendicular. Large blocks of granite, more particularly in the western part of the town, are seen in many places, resting on these strata, often near the summits of the hills. To the geologist these are interesting, as they lead back his mind at once to that mighty rush of waters, probably the general deluge, when they were driven to their present station, and enable him to account for the diluvial scratches observed on the ledges in this and the neighboring towns.

" Talcose slate," says professor Hitchcock in his excellent Report on the Geology of Massachusetts, " is, in general, a mere variety of mica slate, talc taking the place of mica, or being superadded to it. Where the talcose slate, however, is most pure, so as in fact to be little else but slaty talc, with more or less quartz, the soil, which its decomposition produces, is decidedly inferior to that resulting from mica slate ; and probably this is owing to the large quantity of magnesia, which talc contains.

" Mica slate produces a soil of a medium quality. Some varieties of it underlie tracts of superior quality. But the most extensive tract of mica slate in Massachusetts consists of the high and mountainous region west of Connecticut river ; so that it is difficult to compare the soil lying over it with that of formations at a lower level. The deep ravines, so common in the mica slate, furnish many fertile, though limited patches of ground ; while the mountain sides are very superior for grazing." In the east part of Plainfield, as the same writer elsewhere observes, " the geest is so abundant as to occupy most of the surface, the subjacent rock scarcely appearing."

The principal use of these rocks, besides that of fences, for

which they are extensively employed, is for door stones, hearth stones and foundation stones for our buildings. For these purposes they answer well, except that hearth stones commonly crack in the middle, after being exposed to heat. This rock was formerly made into gravestones ; but this use of it is now superseded by the introduction of the Berkshire marble. With us it has not yet been wrought into whetstones, though the finer varieties answer well for this purpose, and manufactories of the kind have been established in some of the neighboring towns, particularly Cummington and Norwich. The talcose slate bears the fire much better than mica slate, and is, on this account, sometimes used for jambs.

"In Plainfield and Hawley," says professor Hitchcock, "a variety of talcose slate occurs, in which are disseminated numerous crystals of black hornblende. The talc is green, and the quartz white, and the rock admits of a polish. Sometimes the talc almost disappears ; and then we have a white base with black crystals imbedded. In short, I feel satisfied that this rock would form a beautiful ornamental stone, if wrought into tables, urns, chimney pieces, and the like. Large blocks of it might be obtained, which would be very firm throughout."

Some varieties of our rocks are remarkably beautiful, and are often noticed by geologists as such. "In truth," says professor Eaton, "there is more beauty in the structure of the rocks of Hawley and Plainfield than of any other place, that I ever visited "

MINERALOGY.

Few towns afford so rich and diversified a mineralogy as this ; and it is frequently visited by naturalists from motives of curiosity and science, particularly for the purpose of enriching their cabinets The following is a list of the principal minerals, so far as they have been hitherto discovered.

Limestone, darkcolored, scintillating and very fetid.

Limpid quartz, sometimes crystalized. Fragments of this variety are frequently picked up in the streets and fields.

Smoky quartz, both crystalized and amorphous. The largest crystal, that has been discovered, is about 3 inches long and 2 broad.

Irised quartz. Its colors, which are generally red, yellow or orange, and very delicate, seem to arise from a thin coat of metallic oxyd on the surface, or in its fissures.

Blue quartz, well characterized.

Laminated quartz. It occurs both of the milky and smoky varieties.

Kyanite, in small quantities in mica slate. The color is not deep but delicate.

Black tourmaline, common. The crystals are generally small, finely striated, with shining surfaces, and confusedly intermixed. Beautiful specimens of the radiated variety have been found a little east of the meeting house.

Garnets, very abundant in mica slate, also in talcose slate. Several years since, a large mass of limpid quartz was discovered in a wall near the mine of manganese on John Bisbee's land, in which was imbedded a great number of garnets of uncommon beauty, much resembling the precious garnet. Specimens of this singular aggregate were sent to various mineralogists, and it is described by professor Silliman in the fourth volume of the American Journal of Science, and by professor Hitchcock in the sixth volume of the same work. The latter describes the garnets as "trapezohedrons, or having at least as many as twenty-four sides;" and the former says, "They are trapezoidal and rhomboidal; often translucent and rich in color, and truncated deeply on the solid edges."

Epidote, amorphous and crystalized.

Amianthus, in quartz, found in the pasture of James Loud. Its color is white.

Common hornblende. This occurs well crystalized and commonly darkcolored.

Fasciculite of Hitchcock. This variety of hornblende is very common here. Its crystals have a very singular and beautiful appearance, resembling bundles of rods tied together near the middle, and thence diverging. An excellent figure of this variety is given by professor Hitchcock in the sixth volume of the American Journal of Science.

Common serpentine, in loose masses. This stone, which is of a dark green color and extremely hard, takes a fine polish, and might be manufactured to great advantage into mortars for apothecaries, also into table furniture, such as bowls, plates and the like. For these purposes it would possess unrivaled beauty.

Common chlorite, well characterized.

Common clay, from which bricks are manufactured in sufficient quantities for the use of the inhabitants.

Porcelain clay. A quantity, mixed with imperfect crystals of quartz, was thrown up in digging Orrin Tirrill's well.

Sulphur, pulverulent, in the same rock with the cummingtonite.

Sulphuret of iron, very common, particularly in granular quartz, also in serpentine. According to professor Hitchcock, it is found also in limpid quartz.

Magnetic oxyd of iron. Masses have been found near the new leather manufactory, on the west side of the brook, exactly resembling the ore from Hawley. It also occurs in well defined octahedral crystals in mica slate and gneiss ; also in small cubic crystals in granular quartz.

Specular oxyd of iron, in small qantities.

Carbonate of iron, beautifully crystalized in rhombs, which are nearly white, have a shining surface, and are frequently curved or undulated.

Black oxyd of manganese. There are two mines of this ore in the south-west part of the town ; one on William Robinson's land, the other on John Bisbee's.

Bisilicate of manganese. This is found at the mine on John Bisbee's land. It is of a light, but very lively rose red color, associated with the gray oxyd ; and around both the black oxyd commonly forms an envelope. A specimen of this mineral from Cummington, (where it occurs, perhaps in greater abundance than with us,) was sent by Doctor Torrey of New York to the celebrated chymist, professor Thomson of Glasgow, by whom it was analyzed and described under this name in the third volume of the Annals of the Lyceum of Natural History of New York.

Professor Hitchcock, who visited one of our mines of manganese in 1831, thus describes them in his Report on the Geology of Massachusetts. " Beds of the oxyd of manganese occur in two places in this town,—one a mile west of the center, and the other near the south-west corner of the town ; and both in talcose slate. Two ores are associated at both these places, the common gray or black oxyd and the silicious oxyd, the gray or black oxyd investing the latter as a black crust, and most probably arising from its decomposition ; while the latter, when newly broken, is of a delicate rose red. I suspect the silicious oxyd predominates at

these places ; and from these beds probably came, by diluvial action, those numerous rounded masses of silicious oxyd in the vicinity of Cummington meeting house, although a deep valley intervenes, and the distance is three or four miles. An attempt was made, some years ago, to explore one of these beds, under the impression that the ore was iron. But how extensive either of them is, it is difficult to determine, as each seems to consist of a number of small beds,—or rather the ore is interlaminated with the slate. The occurrence of so much silicious oxyd at these localities is very interesting to the mineralogist, because this ore is so rare in Europe."

The same writer observes that " in a metallic state this mineral is of no use ; and, indeed, it is reduced to that state with great difficulty. But, in the state of oxyd, it is extensively employed, both to remove color from glass, and to impart colors; also in painting porcelain and glazing pottery, and still more extensively, within a few years, in the manufacture of the chloride of lime, now so generally used in bleaching and for disinfection."

Red oxyd of titanium, in small quantities.

Sulphuret of molybdena, in small quantities, in gneiss.

Cummingtonite. Several years since a very curious mineral was discovered at Cummington and at Plainfield, at both which places it occurs in large quantities. Specimens were sent to the most eminent mineralogists in the country. After a considerable time had elapsed, it was described by professor Dewey, in the eighth volume of the American Journal of Science, under the name of cummingtonite, from the place where it was first discovered. " I have given," said he, " this name to a mineral found by Doctor J. Porter in Cummington. It appears to be a variety of epidote. Its color is gray, sometimes with a faint reddish tinge, unless when acted on by the weather, when its color is yellowish. It is in indistinct prisms with oblique seams like zoisite, and in radiated or fascicled masses, which are composed of slender prisms. Luster somewhat shining or pearly. It is nearly as hard as quartz, and sometimes makes a slight impression upon rock crystal. Before the blowpipe it blackens, and a small portion melts, when the heat is very great, into a black slag, which is attracted by the magnet. Its point of fusion seems to be about the same as that of zoisite. After allowing for some absorption, the specific gravity may be taken at

about 3. 42. It is so peculiar a mineral, that it deserves, even as a variety, a distinct name.

"With quartz and garnets it forms a large mass in Cummington. The cavities in the rock contain pulverulent sulphur of a dirty greenish color, and minute crystals of magnetic oxyd of iron are also found in it."

A delicate variety has since been discovered, in which the crystals are much smaller, and the garnets minute, and of a light reddish color. Specimens of this mineral were likewise sent to Doctor Thomson of Glasgow, by whom it was analyzed, and, in September, 1823, a communication from him was read before the Lyceum of Natural History of New York, in which it is stated that "cummingtonite is undoubtedly a new mineral species, allied to karpholite."

In this connection I may observe that a deposit of gold has been discovered at Somerset, Vermont, in the range of talcose slate, that passes through this town, and it may be well for us to search for it here. Professor Hitchcock says expressly, "I know of no place where the formation is so perfectly developed in its character as in Hawley and Plainfield. There is then, surely, as much ground for presuming that gold will be found in Massachusetts, as there was for predicting its discovery in Vermont.' And he mentions the vicinity of the Plainfield beds of manganese as one of the localities where it might be looked for with great probability of success. To those disposed to search for this precious metal I would observe that they will be most likely to find it by looking a little to the south or south-east of the range of talcose slate, as the rush of waters, that tore up our strata, was evidently from the north, or rather the north-west, and of course drove the rocks and earth in an opposite direction.

SURFACE.

This township lies on the eastern side of the Green Mountains. As might be expected, the surface is undulating, and, in many parts, rough and broken; less so, however, than that of the adjoining towns. Indeed, the summit of East Hill, on which is the principal village, may be considered as level through nearly the whole breadth of the town.

The lover of natural scenery is often gratified with fine views; indeed, from many eminences the pastures and fields may be viewed as a map. Walking in the woods is also extremely delightful, especially in the spring ; and the writer has enjoyed many a ramble through the grove and over

"The craggy hill, where rocks with wild flowers crowned,
Burst from the shady copse and verdant ground;
Where sportive nature every form assumes,
And sweetly lavish spreads a thousand blooms."

PONDS AND STREAMS.

There are two ponds, both in the north-west part of the town ; the North Pond, which is about a mile long, and about half a mile wide, and the Crooked Pond, so called from its figure. The scenery around these ponds is wild, and may, perhaps, be said to partake of the gloomy, for here, for the most part, the forests have never been touched, and nature, in all her wildness,

"Still on her bosom wears the enameled vest,
That bloomed and budded on her infant breast."—PIERPONT.

The waters of the North Pond empty into Deerfield river at Charlemont, and thence into the Connecticut at Deerfield, while those of the Crooked Pond empty into the South Pond in Windsor, which is the head of one of the branches of Westfield river, and fall into the Connecticut at West Springfield. The North Pond is dotted with islands, and is a favorite place of resort for anglers and parties of pleasure ; and both have peculiar attractions to the botanist, as some very rare and interesting aquatic plants are found on the shores, and in the water.

As these ponds are but scantily supplied with fish, I would respectfully suggest to our enterprising young men, particularly such as are fond of angling, the expediency and importance of introducing into them not only the best kinds of fish found elsewhere in our waters, but those, which are generally considered as belonging to the sea, such as the herring, salmon, mackerel, cod, haddock and others. That the experiment would not succeed we have no sufficient reason for saying; indeed, it is said that it has succeeded in England, and, so far as experiments have been tried, in this country. Whoever should accomplish so benevolent an undertaking,

would be considered a public benefactor, and might probably live to see every one's mouth full of the consequences.

There are no large streams in this town. Mill Brook, running from north-west to south-east through the center of the town, is the largest. On this stream there are three sawmills, a corn mill, two cloth manufactories and a tannery. In one of the sawmills there is an apparatus for turning broom handles, and in the corn mill one for turning shoe lasts. An improved machine for turning broom handles, for which a patent is obtained, has been invented by John Bisbee of this place.

There is a smaller stream in the west part of the town, on which is a sawmill; and another in the east, on which is a sawmill and a cloth manufactory. There is another sawmill on a small stream in the north-east corner of the town.

The township is exceedingly well supplied with springs of excellent water. To many of the houses it is brought in pipes at a trifling expense. The village a little east of the meeting house is supplied from a spring more than half a mile distant, at an expense of 22 dollars a year. Wooden pipes are the only ones hitherto used.

SOIL AND PRODUCTIONS.

The native timber of our forests consists principally of maple, (of which we have four species,) beech, birch, hemloc, spruce, fir and cherry. From the sugar maple large quantities of sugar are manufactured. A variety, called the bird's eye maple, is highly esteemed for cabinet work. Cherry is also much used for the same purpose. Our boards and shingles are generally made of hemloc and spruce. Large quantities of hemloc bark are used for tanning leather. It sells at about 2 dollars, 50 cents a cord.

The price of wood for fuel, standing, is about 20 cents a cord; delivered at one's door, from one dollar to one dollar, 25 cents.

As there is very little underbrush in our woods, our farmers are not troubled with bushes. Fields once cleared remain free from these intruders, so troublesome in the eastern part of the state.

For a list of our native plants the botanist is referred to professor Hitchcock's Catalogue of Plants growing in the Vicinity of Amherst College. A more full and complete account is given by

the same gentleman in his Report on the Geology, Mineralogy, Botany and Zoology of Massachusetts.

A collection of the plants, as well as of the minerals found here and in the vicinity, has been made by the writer.

Several years since the practice of setting out that very beautiful and useful tree, the sugar maple, by our road sides was introduced by the writer of this article. Several of our streets are now ornamented in this way; and it is highly desirable that the practice should become general. The mountain ash and locust have also, of late, been transplanted into our dooryards.

To those desirous of enriching their inclosures with ornamental shrubbery, I would observe that plants might be selected from our woods and swamps, such, for instance, as the different species of kalmia, the common prinos or winter berry, the downyleaved spirea or hardhack, the rosemaryleaved andromeda and the sweet briar or eglantine, which would rival the finest productions of our botanic gardens. To these might be added some of our finest herbaceous plants, such as the swamp lily, the climbing corydalis, the ladies' slipper, the purple sarracenia or forefathers' pitcher and the like. Were such plants as these tastefully arranged and carefully cultivated among us, they would diffuse a charm around our dwellings, and be a source of the purest pleasure.

This township has a good, strong soil, very well adapted for grass. Indian corn, wheat and rye are raised without difficulty, but not in sufficient quantities for the use of the inhabitants. Potatoes and oats of excellent quality are very easily raised. Might not molasses be profitably manufactured here from potatoes?

The apple thrives well; and it is believed that the peach, plum, cherry and grape might be cultivated with proper care. Our wild fruits, such as the strawberry and thimbleberry, might, doubtless, be greatly improved by transplanting them into our gardens. Horticulture, however, has not hitherto received that attention among us, which it so justly merits.

Labor is from 50 cents to a dollar a day.

ROADS.

A county road leading from Ashfield to Savoy passes through the center of the town; and two other county roads pass through

parts of the town. Almost the whole town is intersected by roads, as the convenience of the inhabitants requires. These are kept in good repair by an annual tax of about 700 dollars, paid in labor at one dollar a day.

BURIAL GROUNDS.

Several burial grounds have been successively opened in this place. These, it must be confessed, have been too much neglected, and are now in a state, that indicates but little respect to the memory of the dead. In 1808 a new burying ground was opened a little north of the meeting house. This has since been inclosed with a stone fence, and has the appearance of neatness and order. The first person buried here was lieutenant Solomon Shaw, though two of his grandchildren were afterwards taken up and laid by his side. White marble from Lanesborough is generally used for gravestones.

SCHOOLS.

The town is divided into seven school districts. One of them, however, containing but a few scholars, is considered as a half district, and draws its money accordingly. In each of the districts there is a convenient house for the use of the school, that in the east district being of brick, the others of wood.

The length of time, that the schools are taught, varies. As a general estimate, it may be said that each school is taught in the winter about three months by a male instructor, and about as long in the summer by a female. The whole number of scholars, on an average, may be estimated at 350. According to the return of the school committee for 1832, the aggregate time of keeping schools was 18 months by male, and 24 by female teachers; and the whole number of pupils, 360.

These schools are supported by an annual tax of about 350 dollars. This sum, by a vote passed March 12, 1827, is distributed to the different districts in the following proportions; to the center district, 16 dollars; to the others, 10 dollars each, except the west or half district, which has 5 dollars. A select school is frequently taught, generally consisting of both sexes, sometimes of females only.

A school for instruction in sacred music is also occasionally taught here at the expense of the town.

The most important school, however, that has ever been taught in this place, was that kept by the first clergyman of the parish. This school was commenced early in the year 1793, and continued without interruption till September, 1824. More than 300 scholars have attended it. Among those, who here received the early part of their education, and have since risen to distinction, are William Cullen Bryant, the poet; James Richards, Jonas King, Pliny Fisk, Levi Parsons and William Richards, foreign missionaries; William Hale Maynard, Jeremiah Humphrey Hallock; James Hayward, late professor of mathematics and natural philosophy in Harvard University, and Sylvester Hovey, late professor of the same branches in Amherst College.

LIBRARIES.

A social library was established in the south-east part of the town in April, 1832. It contains 97 volumes. The number of private libraries is not great. The largest is that belonging to the writer, which consists of about 400 volumes, some of them of great rarity and value; besides a collection of about 1,200 pamphlets.

LYCEUM.

In December, 1832, a Lyceum was formed for mutual improvement. The number of members is respectable; and the meetings hitherto have been interesting and well attended.

GRADUATES.

The following is a list of those, who have received a public education. Though the number is not great, it is believed they will not suffer by a comparison with those of any other place in our country.

1. James Richards, son of deacon James Richards, and born at Abington, February 23, 1784, was graduated at Williams College in 1809. He studied divinity at Andover, where he completed his education in 1812.

It is supposed by his friends that he became a decided Christian, when about fourteen years old. He was enabled ever after to

support a Christian character and deportment, always manifesting a regard for religion ;—was a strict observer of the sabbath, and a constant attendant on the public worship of God, and other religious meetings. In August, 1805, he publicly professed his faith in Christ, and united with the Congregational church in Plainfield. For many years it was his habitual practice to devote one day in every month to secret fasting and prayer.

While at college, he with seven others, of whom Samuel John Mills was the leader, concerted a plan for the conversion of the world, and prayed into existence the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. This plan was afterwards still further matured at Andover ; and in September, 1811, not long after the formation of the American Board, Mr. Richards offered himself as a missionary to the heathen, and was taken under their patronage.

After completing his theological education, he devoted considerable time, under the direction of the Board, to the study of medicine and surgery, with a view to increased usefulness among the heathen. He attended a course of lectures at Hanover, and two courses at Philadelphia, where he was engaged for some time in the Pennsylvania Hospital. In view of his multiplied engagements while here, for he sometimes had more on hand than he could possibly perform, he remarked in a letter to his friends; "It is much more pleasant to be hurried in business than to be idle."

June 12, 1815, he was ordained with five others at Newburyport, and sailed October 23, for Columbo, where he arrived after a prosperous voyage of five months. When asked, afterwards, how he could refrain from weeping at the time of leaving his native country, and all that was dear to him there, he replied, "Why should I have wept ? I had been waiting with anxiety almost eight years for an opportunity to go and preach Christ among the heathen. I had often wept at the long delay. But the day, on which I bade farewell to my native land, was the happiest day of my life." It was not long, however, before he was so debilitated by the influence of a tropical climate and undue exposure as to be incapable of much active service. This was to him a very severe trial, for he ever retained a strong partiality for the missionary work, as may be seen by the following extract of a letter to his brother.

"Could the friends of missions in America see the things, which I see, and hear the things, which I hear, they would not withhold

their contributions from the treasury of the Lord. Could they see, as I do, the hearts of my brethren and sisters united "as the heart of one man;" could they behold these wretched heathen from day to day, carrying on their breasts and on their foreheads the badges of heathenism, and know the cruel bondage, in which they are held, there would, I think, be no more need of missionary sermons and missionary agents to unlock the coffers of the rich. The country would be all in motion. Some would give their thousands, and multitudes their dollars and cents, till the treasury of the Lord should be filled. If the object could not be effected in any other way, some would live on bread and water, and others would sell their houses and lands, to furnish the means of enlightening the heathen,—of making known to them the only Redeemer of sinners."

The following extracts from letters addressed also to his brother breathe the same intense feeling on the subject of missions to the heathen. From Batticotta, April 17, 1820, he writes: "How long, O! how long will Christians continue to sleep over the miseries of a fallen world! I would give the Christian world all the credit for all they feel, and for all they do, for the salvation of sinners. But I do think that the majority of the Christian world are still asleep, or, at most, but half awake. Even New England Christians are only beginning to awake. O! for another Mills—for another Buchanan—for another Harriet!" From the same place, February 23, 1821, he says, "The principal trial, that I now experience on account of my sickness, is inability to do the proper work of a missionary. And this is a great trial, both by day and by night. No other subject ever engrossed my feelings like that of preaching Christ to the heathen. To the accomplishment of this object I have endeavored to direct all my plans, and all my actions. For this I left almost all, that was dear to me in life, and came to this land of pagan darkness to publish the Savior's love to stupid idolaters. And now, when the miseries of the heathen are full in my view, it is my great trial not to be able to preach te them."

After several years of protracted suffering, he expired at Tillipally in Ceylon, August 3, 1822. "He died rejoicing in the hope of a glorious immortality." He was buried in the afternoon of the next day, (which was the Lord's day,) and converted heathen carried him to his grave.

" His sound judgment, meekness, disinterestedness, faithfulness, love to his Savior, to his fellow missionaries, to the heathen,—his piety towards God, and universal benevolence to men;—rendered him a truly valuable laborer in the vineyard of the Lord." He may justly be considered as one of the first martyrs from this country in the high and holy cause of missions to the heathen.

A monument, bearing the following inscription in English and in Tamul, was placed over his grave by his bereaved widow.

In memory of
The Rev. James Richards, A. M.
American Missionary,
who died August 3, 1822,
Aged 33 years.
One of the first projectors of American Missions,
He gave himself first to Christ, and then to the heathen.
A physician both to soul and body,
He was
In health, laborious,
In sickness, patient,
In death, triumphant.
He is not, for God took him.

Tamul Inscription translated.

In memory of
The Rev. James Richards, A. M.
American Missionary,
who died August 3, 1822,
Aged 33 years.
Reader,
He came to this country to tell you that, excepting
through Christ Jesus, there is no way to
escape Hell, and obtain Heaven.
Believing in this Savior,
He died, rejoicing in hope of eternal happiness.
Let all, who read this, prepare for death also.

The English inscription was written by the Reverend M. Winslow, that in Tamul, by the Reverend H. Woodward.

2. Cyrus Joy, son to Jacob Joy, was graduated at Williams College in 1811. He studied law and practiced at Northampton,

and afterwards in this place. He relinquished the practice several years since, and now resides in Philadelphia.

3. William Allen Hallock, son of the Reverend Moses Hallock, was born June 2, 1794, and graduated at Williams College in 1819. He studied divinity at Andover, and while there, was chosen agent, and afterwards assistant secretary to the American Tract Society, at that time located at Andover. He assisted in the formation of the American Tract Society at New York in 1825, and was chosen the first corresponding secretary and general agent, in which offices he still continues, much to the satisfaction of the society and the public.

This society has stereotyped nearly 700 publications, including about 20 standard evangelical volumes, has printed 35,000,000 copies, and has remitted upwards of 30,000 dollars to aid in the circulation of tracts in heathen lands.

4. Gerard Hallock, son of the Reverend Moses Hallock, was born March 18, 1800, and graduated at Williams College in 1819. He was engaged for a while in instructing youth, particularly as preceptor of Amherst Academy. He afterwards commenced a religious and miscellaneous paper in Boston, entitled the Boston Telegraph. After being published for one year, a union was formed between this paper and the Boston Recorder, and Mr. Hallock continued in the editorship of the united paper till the middle of 1826, when he transferred his interest in the establishment to the Reverend Asa Rand. He then removed to New York, where he became one of the editors and proprietors of the New York Observer, which paper he continued till January, 1829. He is now joint editor and proprietor of the New York Journal of Commerce, one of the largest newspaper establishments in the United States.

5, James Hayward, son of captain James Hayward, was graduated at Harvard University in 1819. In 1820 he was appointed tutor in the department of mathematics and natural philosophy; and in 1826, was made college professor in the same department. This office he resigned in 1827, being appointed a member of the Board of Internal Improvement for the state of Massachusetts, and engineer to that Board. In 1829 he published at Cambridge Elements of Geometry upon the Inductive Method.

6. William Richards, son to deacon James Richards, born

August 22, 1793, was graduated at Williams College in 1819. He studied divinity at Andover Theological Seminary, and was ordained as a missionary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions at New Haven, September 12, 1822. He sailed with his wife from New Haven for the Sandwich Islands, November 19, the same year, where he arrived in April, 1823. His labors here appear to have been very acceptable and useful. "He resides in the village of Lahaina, (in the island of Maui,) one of the most delightful spots in the Sandwich Islands He has a beautiful house built of coral by the natives, two stories high, plastered and whitewashed within and without, with a piazza and handsome yard in front. He has a fertile garden spot, in which every thing wished for may be raised with suitable care." "He preaches in a new coral meeting house to an audience of about 2,500. This house, which was built by the natives with very little expense to the mission, has a gallery, bellfry, and bell, is plastered and whitewashed within and without, with a floor of hewn coral covered with mats." "It is the most substantial and noble structure in Polynesia." "There are," says a writer in the Nantucket Inquirer, "about sixty church members, (exclusive of the missionary families,)" later accounts say 195 in all, "many of them native chiefs. A Temperance Society has been formed, which consists of about forty members. There is not a shop for the sale of ardent spirits on the island, and, indeed, the traffic is rigidly prohibited.

"Of the necessaries and conveniences of life there is a very bountiful supply, together with many of the luxuries used in this country, including an ample stock of dry goods and other merchandize,—and, in short, all the indications of civilized life. The people are kind and hospitable, the climate mild, and the soil fertile,—all presenting numerous inducements to a residence there. This island is considered the most productive of the whole group."

It must be extremely gratifying to the friends of the Redeemer to learn that the missionaries have translated and published the New Testament in the language of these islands.

7. Tilly Brown Hayward, son of captain James Hayward, was born April 2, 1797, and graduated at Harvard University in 1820. Since this time he has been employed in the instruction of youth.

8. Austin Richards son of deacon James Richards, and born February 9, 1800, was educated at Amherst College. He be-

longed to the class of 1824, and, after the institution was incorporated, received the degree of bachelor of arts. He studied divinity at Andover, and was ordained as minister of Francestown, New Hampshire, November 7, 1827.

9. Erastus Dickinson, son of Ebenezer Dickinson, was born April 1, 1807, and graduated at Amherst College in 1832. He is now a member of Auburn Theological Seminary.

POPULATION.

The number of inhabitants from the settlement of the town to the census of 1790 can not be accurately ascertained. In that year there were 458; in 1800, 797; in 1810, 977; in 1820, 936; in 1830, 983. This slow increase is owing to no unusual cause, except the great number of emigrations.

The number of ratable polls is 220. The number of voters, according to a list made out by the selectmen in March, 1834, is 207.

BILL OF MORTALITY.

The church records furnish by far the most complete list of deaths; those of the district and town being considered too imperfect in this respect to be of much value. Unfortunately, in the church records, the ages are not given till 1802. The following table exhibits the most complete list, that I have been able to obtain, of the deaths from 1785, inclusive, to the present time, with the name and age of the oldest person, who died in each year from 1802. Such of our inhabitants as died abroad are not reckoned in this list.

1785,	2			1794,	13
1786,	2			1795,	2
1787,	8			1796,	11
1788,	6			1797,	8
1789,	2			1798,	0
1790,	3			1799,	10
1791,	6			1800,	13
1792,	7			1801,	18
1793,	3				
1802,	9	Widow Macintire,			83.
1803,	30	John Carr,			94.

1804,	15	Jacob Gloyd,	71.
1805,	11	Deacon John Packard's wife,	60.
1806,	15	Widow Whiton,	86.
1807,	14	Deacon John Packard,	71.
1808,	18	Moses Curtis,	86.
1809,	8	Jacob Hawes,	68.
1810,	15	Widow Snow,	81.
1811,	11	Seth Ford's wife,	86.
1812,	12	Jacob Joy,	77.
1813,	17	Deacon Joseph Beals,	61.
1814,	16	Ebenezer Beals,	83.
1815,	13	Jepthah Pool's wife,	60.
1816,	11	Widow Hannah Colson,	96.
1817,	12	Caleb Beals,	60.
1818,	14	Widow Hannah Smith,	75.
1819,	14	Widow Shaw,	81.
1820,	7	John Joy's wife,	39.
1821,	12	Benjamin Pool,	56.
1822,	10	Widow Daniels,	76.
1823,	13	Joseph Pool,	84.
1824,	15	Samuel Whitman,	93.
1825,	13	Deacon Gideon Shaw,	80.
1826,	16	Levi Stetson,	80.
1827,	8	Caleb Joy,	76.
1828,	9	Ammon White,	82.
1829,	13	Noah Packard's wife,	75.
1830,	17	Benjamin Carr's wife,	82.
1831,	13	Widow Abigail Vining,	71.
1832,	7	Jacob Clarke,	77.
1833,	9	Gideon Hammond,	90.

In the years 1794 and 1803 the scarlet fever prevailed; in 1806, the typhus fever. It is remarkable that, in the year 1798, there was no death; also, from Augusr 5, 1827, to March 17, 1828, more than seven months, no person died. No instance of suicide or murder ever occurred in this town.

The following deaths seem worthy of particular notice. January 9, 1804, Lucinda Packard of this town, but resident in Cummington, was found dead in her bed. May 19, 1804, James Thayer was drowned at Cummington, aged 21. "June 22, 1812,

Levi Stetson, junior, was killed almost instantly by the fall of a tree, aged 35." August 11, the same year, "the wife of Gideon Hammond died in her chair at work, instantly, as is supposed; probably of the dropsy. Her husband awoke from a short nap after dinner, and found her sitting at her quillwheel, dead. Her age was 51." October 22, 1817, a son of Judson Stetson died from a bean in the windpipe, aged 5. May 4, 1820, Daniel Brown was killed instantly by a milllog rolling over him. May 10, 1828, the wife of Benjamin Towne, aged 39, was found, after much search, dead in the woods at Hawley, having wandered from home several days before, in a state of derangement. October 28, 1831, Clarissa Stetson, aged 8, died in consequence of her clothes' taking fire. July 11, 1833, Samuel Swift, residing in this place, was killed instantly, at Cummington, by the fall of a tree, aged about 50. March 8, 1834, Charles Bela Dyer, 2 years old, died in consequence of a piece of apple in the windpipe.

"Man is like a vapor;
His life is like a shadow, that passeth away."—DAVID.

CIVIL HISTORY.

It does not appear that the Indians ever resided on these mountains, though, doubtless, their hunting parties occasionally traversed them in pursuit of game. The only antiquity belonging to the natives of the forest, that has been found here within my knowledge, is an arrowhead; and this is unfortunately lost.

Cummington, including Plainfield, was sold by the General Court to colonel John Cummings of Concord, June 2, 1762. The first meeting of the proprietors was held at Concord, December 21, the same year. The first meeting held at Cummington was on the third Wednesday of June, 1771.

The first person, who resided within the present limits of the town, was a Scotchman by the name of Macintire, who, with his family, began a settlement here in March, 1770. In the true spirit of Scotch hospitality, they used to prepare a haggess at each of their daughters' wedding feasts.

Many of the early settlers came from Bridgewater and Abington. Captain Joseph Joy is the first male inhabitant now living. Widow Ruth Cook, now in her ninety-fifth year, is the earliest settler

living, and the oldest person in town. Her son, John Cook, who was born October 27, 1778, is, so far as is known, the first person born in the town.

One of the first settlers, lately deceased, informed me that deer were very common here about 50 years since, and that he had seen tracks made by them in the snow similar to the paths made by our cattle in going to drink, and that a large number of them made their head quarters on Deer Hill in Cummington, but were entirely extirpated by the hunters of those days. He also said that one was caught by some hunters at a time when the snow in the woods would not bear him up, and, one of the party taking a fancy to ride him, he was tied on by the feet, and a bridle being put into the animal's mouth, he galloped off with his rider in full speed On coming, however, to a cleared spot, the crust was so hard as to bear up both the deer and his rider, so that, owing to the intractable disposition of his beast, and the rapidity and eccentricity of his movements, his airing was not the most agreeable. Wolves and bears were also not uncommon in these early times.

It is believed that in the revolutionary struggle this town furnished its full proportion of men and means, as the present number of pensioners seems to show.

Cummington including Plainfield was incorporated as a town June 23, 1779. The first town meeting was held December 20, the same year. Plainfield was incorporated ss a district of Cummington, March 16, 1785. The first district meeting was notified and warned by Isaac Joy, pursuant to a warrant from Nahum Eager, esquire, of Worthington. This meeting was holden in the house of Simon Burroughs on Monday, July 25, 1785. Ebenezer Colson acted as moderator, and the following were the principal officers chosen: Joshua Shaw, district clerk; Ebenezer Colson, John Packard and John Cunningham, selectmen; Joshua Shaw, district treasurer; Isaac Joy and John Packard, tythingmen; John Streeter, deerreve. A deerreve was also chosen the next year.

In the insurrection under Shays in 1786, several of the inhabitants took a part. They were, however, soon convinced that they were in the wrong, and took the oath of allegiance.

March 22, 1790. "Voted to raise twenty pounds for schooling the ensuing year." April 5, 1790. "Voted to build school houses in each district for schooling."

February 4, 1794, Joseph Clarke and Jonathan Beals with their families, together with all the lands lying north of a strait line from the south-east corner of Plainfield to the south-west corner of Ashfield was set off from the town of Ashfield, and annexed to the district of Plainfield. June 21, 1803, one mile of the southerly part of Hawley was set off to the district of Plainfield.

May, 15, 1806, it was "voted unanimously to petition the General Court to set off the district of Plainfield from Cummington, and incorporate it into a town." This was accordingly done, June 15, 1807.

It appears that this town has always been opposed to a division of the county. In 1805, this opposition was expressed by a unanimous and very full vote; and in 1811, a similar vote passed unanimously. The division, however, could not be prevented; and, soon after this, to borrow the forcible language of president Dwight, a native of Northampton, "This noble county, after existing as a fine Doric column of industry, good order, morals, learning and religion in Massachusetts for more than a century, was by an unwise legislature broken into three parts. Of its ruins were formed the three counties, of Franklin on the north, Hampshire in the middle, and Hampden on the south; each of them extending through the original breadth of the county of Hampshire. One political purpose, intended to be answered by this disruption, was to destroy the firm order and sound principles of the inhabitants. How far the plan will succeed, time alone can discover. From analogy it may be concluded, or, at least, rationally feared, that the inhabitants will lose some part of their elevation of character. Little counties almost of course have little officers, and little concerns; and the existence of these is but too commonly followed by a contraction of views, a diminution of measures, a destruction of influence and a deterioration of character."

A postoffice was established here in 1816.

Representatives.

Previous to the incorporation of Plainfield as a town in 1807, the representatives were chosen by the inhabitants of Cummington and Plainfield in joint meeting. When no date is given, the town was not represented.

1786, William Ward of Cummington,
1787, William Ward,
1788, William Ward,
1790, William Ward,
1791, William Ward,
1793, James Richards,
1796, William Ward,
1797, William Ward,
1798, James Richards,
1800, Ebenezer Snell of Cummington,
1801, James Richards,
1802, Ebenezer Snell,
1803, James Richards,
1804, Ebenezer Snell,
1805, James Richards,
1806, Peter Bryant of Cummington,
Adam Packard of Cummington,
1808, John Cunningham,
1809, John Cunningham,
1810, John Cunningham,
1811, James Richards,
1812, James Richards,
1813, John Hamlin,
1814, John Hamlin,
1815, John Hamlin,
1816, James Richards,
1819, Cyrus Joy,
1821, Elijah Warner,
1823, John Hamlin,
1826, John Hamlin,
1827, Elijah Warner,
1828, John Mack,
1829, John Mack,
1830, John Mack,
1831, Erastus Bates,
1832, Erastus Bates,
1833, Erastus Bates,
1834, Erastus Bates.

Delegate to a Convention from the Counties of Hampshire, Franklin and Hampden at Northampton, July 14 and 15, 1812.
Nehemiah Joy.

Delegate to the Convention for revising the Constitution, November, 1820.
James Richards.

Justices of the Peace.

Appointed,
June 8, 1802, James Richards, commission expired January 28, 1830;
May 23, 1812, Ebenezer Colson, removed to Hamilton, New York, May, 1816;
June 18, 1819, Cyrus Joy, removed toNew York, 1824;
February 19, 1827, Iram Packard, removed to Ohio, September, 1832;
February 25, 1828, Elijah Warner;
March 11, 1830, John Mack, died February 15, 1833, aged 54;
March 23, 1833, Erastus Bates, removed to Ohio, May, 1834;
February 7, 1834, Leavitt Hallock.

Attornies.

Several attornies have practiced here, each for a short time; but no one has met with sufficient encouragement to make it his permanent residence.

Physicians.

Solomon Bond, Barney Torrey, Jacob Porter and Samuel Shaw have successively practiced physic in this place. The last named is a fellow of the Massachusetts Medical Society.

Militia.

There are two companies of militia; an artillery company with two brass field pieces, and a company of infantry. Their discipline is thought to be fully equal to that of the neighboring towns.

Revolutionary Pensioners.

Lemuel Allis,	$96,00
Joseph Barnard,	96,00
Ebenezer Bisbee,	20,00
John Campbell, died April 26, 1833, aged 80,	23,33
Vinson Curtis,	80,00
Ebenezer Dickinson,	30,00
James Dyer,	100,00
Joseph Gloyd,	20,00
Reverend Moses Hallock,	23,33
Jacob Nash,	100,00
Philip Packard,	96,00
Whitcomb Pratt,	80,00
James Richards,	25,55
Josiah Shaw,	80.00
Samuel Streeter,	96,00
Josiah Torrey,	106,66
Caleb White,	32,33

The Poor.

The poor have, in some instances, been struck off at auction to the lowest bidder. At other times, perhaps more generally, they have been committed to the care of the overseers of the poor, to be provided for according to their best discretion. The cost of supporting them has never been great. At present, only one person is assisted by the town, at an expense of 72 cents a week,= 37 dollars, 44 cents a year.

Taxes for 1834.

Minister's salary,	$400,00
For the support of schools,	350,00
For the support of the poor and other necessary charges,	300,00
For the repair of highways,	600,00

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

Congregational Society.

Previous to the incorporation of Plainfield as a district, the inhabitants attended divine service at Cummington, and formed part of the ministerial charge of the Reverend James Briggs, who was ordained there July 7, 1779. It appears that, on leaving his ministry, measures were almost immediately taken to set up public worship among themselves; for, on the eleventh of August, 1785, the following vote was passed: "Voted to raise fourteen pounds to hire preaching the present year." Similar votes occur frequently in the early records.

A church of fourteen members was organized here August 31, 1789. The following confession of faith and church covenant were adopted, and have ever since continued in force.

"Confession of Faith.

"Article 1. We believe there is one only living and true God, in three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; and that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

"2. We believe that the scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the word of God, and the only rule of faith and practice.

"3. We believe that man was created in the image of God, holy and upright; and that God entered into a covenant of life with him upon condition of perfect obedience, particularly forbidding him to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil upon pain of death.

"4. We believe that our first parents sinned by eating of the forbidden fruit, and, as Adam was a public head and representative, he, by his disobedience, exposed himself and all his posterity to the wrath of God and everlasting death.

"5. We believe that God of his mere grace and good pleasure, has determined to save some of the lost children of men; and that those, whom he has thus chosen, he will, in his own time, effectually call and finally save.

"6. We believe that the holy scriptures reveal the only method God has proposed for their salvation, and that, in order to execute

the purposes of his grace therein, he has appointed his Son Jesus Christ to be the only mediator and Savior of sinners, whom he sent into the world in our nature, "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life;" and that, through his perfect righteousness and atonement, all, who believe, and no others, are justified and saved.

"7. We believe that no man in a natural state has a disposition to come to Christ, or power to do any thing, by which he can merit salvation; and that they, who do come, are made willing by the saving influence of God's spirit, working in them to will and do of his own good pleasure.

"8. We believe that, at the last day, Christ will raise the dead and judge the world in righteousness, and will receive the righteous to everlasting life, and condemn the wicked to everlasting punishment."

"*Church Covenant.*

"We publicly declare our serious belief of the Christian religion contained in the sacred scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and as is, in general, exhibited in the Assembly's Shorter Catechism; and, in humble reliance on the aid of divine grace, we heartily resolve to conform ourselves to the rules of Christ's holy religion as long as we live.

"We therefore give ourselves to God, to walk with him in a a life of holy obedience, acknowledging our obligations to glorify him in all the duties of the Christian life, in sobriety and godliness, relying on Christ, our Savior, for eternal salvation. Particularly, we desire and engage, in reliance on divine grace, to walk together as a church of Christ in the faith and order of the gospel, according to all the ordinances of it; conscienciously attending the public worship of God, the sacraments of the New Testament, gospel discipline, and all Christ's holy institutions; communing with and watching over one another according to the rules of the gospel; "studying the things, that make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another."

"We further engage religiously to instruct our offspring in the doctrines of the Christian religion, and carefully to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" in all relying on

divine grace, and praying that God would "make us perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in us that, which is well pleasing in his sight."

On the fourteenth of May, 1787, the district voted unanimously to give Mr. James Thomson a call to settle with them in the gospel ministry, (the church having previously passed a similar vote,) and to give him a yearly salary of sixty pounds in specific articles. This invitation was declined.

August 16, 1787, a committee was appointed "to measure and find the center of Plainfield, and likewise to agree upon a place, which they shall think most proper for erecting a meeting house." May 23, 1791, a spot of ground was agreed on for building a meeting house; and October 27, it was voted to build the meeting house, and that it should be 55 feet and a half by 42 feet and a half. November 23, a committee consisting of Caleb White, captain John Cunningham, captain James Richards, Andrew Cook and John Hamlin was appointed "to procure materials and carry on the building of said meeting house in such a manner as shall be most advantageous to the district, according to their best discretion."

April 23, 1792, "Voted that the owners of pews in the meeting house procure rum to raise said building." The meeting house was raised soon after; but, owing to the limited resources of the district at that time, it was not completed till 1797. It was then dedicated on the fifteenth of June; two sermons being preached on the occasion; one by the Reverend Aaron Bascom of Chester, the other by the Reverend John Leland of Partridgefield, now Peru. The meeting house contained 44 pews below and 19 in the gallery. To this number two were afterwards added above, and two below. One pew was reserved for the use of the minister.

March 8, 1791, the church "voted to give Mr. Moses Hallock a call to settle with them in the work of gospel ministry." March 14, the district passed the same vote unanimously, also "voted that the following offers should be made to Mr. Hallock for his settlement and maintenance; to wit, ninety pounds for his settlement; and forty-five pounds a year for the two first years, then to increase five pounds a year until it amounts to sixty pounds, there to remain." To this invitation the candidate gave his answer in the negative, on account of infirm health.

March 8, 1792, the church "voted to renew the call to the said Hallock." In this vote the district concurred, March 12, and made him the same offers for his settlement and salary as before; "his settlement and salary to be paid, one quarter in cash, and the other three quarters in farm produce at cash price."

His answer being in the affirmative, he was ordained July 11. The sermon was preached by the Reverend Samuel Whitman of Goshen, from this text in Ezekiel: "And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and the profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean." This discourse, probably in an enlarged form, was published at Northampton, under the title of "Two Sermons, the Substance of which was preached at the Ordination of the Rev. Moses Hallock, to the Pastoral Care of the Church in Plainfield, July 11, 1792." Of this pamphlet, which is now very scarce, there is a copy in the Antiquarian Hall at Worcester, and another in the library of the writer. It is believed that this is the only sermon or address of any kind delivered in Plainfield, that has ever been committed to the press.

The Reverend Moses Hallock was born on Long Island, February 16, 1760. Before devoting himself to study, he spent some time in the revolutionary army. He received his education at Yale College, where he was graduated in 1788. His studies in divinity were pursued under the instruction of the Reverend Samuel Whitman of Goshen, where his parents resided. His labors, during the long period of his ministry, have been acceptable and useful in a remarkable degree. In the discharge of his duty,

> "He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
> Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way."—Goldsmith.

A mutual interchange of good offices between him and the members of his society has long since closely knit the ties of affection.

There have been several very interesting revivals of religion during his ministry. "It pleased God graciously to pour out his holy spirit upon the people of this place in the year 1790. Its first appearance was on the fifteenth of August; and, in consequence of this glorious work, 17 joined the church in one day." "Towards the close of the year 1797, it pleased God once more to visit this place with a remarkable effusion of his holy spirit. The awakening was, more or less, in almost every part of the town, and,

in some parts, very powerful. And, in consequence of this marvelous work of divine grace, 31 persons joined the church the following year, the most of whom trust they were born of God in this awakening." "July 1, 1798, 24 persons adorned the alley at one time, and appeared to rejoice at an opportunity to confess the Lord Jesus."

In 1800 an excellent bell was procured, partly at the expense of the district, and partly by subscription. It was cast at New Haven by Fenton and Cochran, and weighs about 650 pounds. A bellfry with a steeple, to which is attached a lightning rod, was erected at the same time.

In the early part of the year 1808, there was a great revival of religion, and 34 were admitted to the church on the first of May, and 26 on the third of July.

In 1813, and for some time afterwards, the Unitarian controversy produced considerable excitement; and, in 1816, one brother was suspended from the church, and afterwards excommunicated for publicly dissenting from the creed, and expressing his disbelief of the doctrine of the trinity and the supreme deity of Jesus Christ.

A Sunday school, consisting of 109 scholars, was established here in May, 1819. This has ever since been continued with great and increasing usefulness.

In 1822, two stoves for warming the meeting house were procured, and placed near the pulpit.

In 1823 an elegant London copy of Gurney's Family Bible, published in 1816, and embellished with a series of engravings from paintings by the first artists, was presented for the pulpit by James Hayward, tutor in Harvard College. The practice of publicly reading the scriptures on the Lord's day had been introduced some years before.

January 5, 1823, 10 persons were admitted into the church; November 4, 1827, 29 persons were admitted.

June 3, 1829, the Reverend John H. Russ was ordained here as an evangelist by the Mountain Association; sermon by the Reverend William A. Hawley of Hinsdale.

August 23, 1830, the church chose a committee to superintend the monthly distribution of tracts. This distribution has been attended to since, though not with all the regularity, that could be wished.

In the spring of 1829, the venerable minister of the society, after having discharged the duties of his office with uncommon fidelity for nearly 37 years, made the following communication to his beloved people.

" To the Inhabitants of the Town of Plainfield.

" My brethren and friends, the time approaches when I shall no longer be your minister. This awfully responsible, though pleasant work must soon be committed to the hands of some other man. I have entered my seventieth year, " and know not the day of my death." When a parent is about to die, he endeavors to set his house in order, that it may be well with his family after his decease. With equal ardor I desire that you, as a religious community, may have a good minister of Jesus Christ when my lips shall be unable to keep knowledge. Before I die, I wish to see my pulpit occupied by such a minister: And may he be far more useful to old and young than his predecessor, and as much respected.

" As soon as you are ready to settle another minister, which will probably be in a year or two, I will consent, the church and congregation requesting it, that the ordaining council should dismiss me on the day of ordination.

" It is not uncommon, in cases like this, that the town make some provision for the support of the worn out pastor. If you should please, by legal vote, to commit to my disposal as my own property the pew, which my family occupy, or some other as valuable, and also to exempt me and the little property I may possess from all kinds of taxation during my life, it will be thankfully accepted.

Moses Hallock.

March 2, 1829."

To this communication a committee, appointed for the purpose, made the following report:

" To the Inhabitants of the Town of Plainfield.

" Fellow citizens, your committee can not but regard the subject committed to them for consideration as of immense moment, as a subject specially involving both the temporal and eternal interests of the present and succeeding generations of the inhabitants of this

town. Perhaps there is no subject, upon which a town is called to act, that is more calculated to test the stability, or the peace and union of the society, or which is attended with more important results than the dismissing and settling of a minister. Our reverend pastor, in his communication, apprises the people of this town that such an important and trying season among us is not far distant.

"" The time approaches," says he, "when I shall no longer be your minister. This awfully responsible, though pleasant work must soon be committed to the hands of some other man."

"As we are called upon to reply to our minister's proposals, and to act as the first moving committee on the part of the town in advising with reference to future proceedings towards accomplishing the great object we have in view, we can not but be sensible that an important trust is reposed in us, which requires on our part much caution and deliberation. We hope we shall all be able to treat the subject with that candor, which it demands, and also advise to such measures as will issue in happy results.

"In the first place, we would express our most cordial approbation of the course, which our aged pastor has taken to make known his desires to his people, and effect the object he has in view.

"We do regard this communication as a timely and well advised effort on the part of Mr. Hallock to promote the future well-being of his people, and to perpetuate that union and harmony, for which we, as a religious community, have been so long distinguished. More conciliatory and liberal propositions he could not have made. He hereby evinces that he seeks not ours but us; that he still retains an affectionate regard for the dear people, over which the holy spirit hath so long made him overseer. And his solicitude for us extends beyond the time when he shall have ceased to be our minister, or shall have closed his eyes in death. To use his own similitude: "When a parent is about to die, he endeavors to set his house in order, that it may be well with his family after his decease. With equal ardor I desire that you, as a religious community, may have a good minister of Jesus Christ when my lips shall be unable to keep knowledge." When we reflect that more than half his days have been spent in our service, and take into consideration the mutual confidence and affection, that have so long subsisted between him and his people, the appa-

rent success, which has attended his ministry, the harmony and good feeling, which have prevailed in church and society, the several revivals of religion and frequent instances of conversion, which have been witnessed, together with the gradual advance of the church in numbers, and we hope also in piety; we say, when these and other considerations as fruits of his faithfulness urge themselves upon us, the thought of dissolving our connection with him as our pastor is a painful reflection. But, as it is certain, according to the common course of nature, that he must soon become unable, either by the infirmities of age or the arrest of death, to officiate in ministerial duties, we, therefore, concur with his proposals, and think it expedient to have another minister settled before his decease, as we shall probably succeed better, and more to the satisfaction of all parties, now than when deprived of the counsel and cooperation of our present minister.

"Concerning the time when we shall settle another minister, Mr. Hallock himself has given intimations in his communication. Should we become united in a candidate, perhaps some period within the limits of the time, which he proposed, which was a year or two, would suit the wishes and convenience of the people as well as any other.

"In order to avail ourselves of the best and most favorable opportunity of securing a candidate, who will be most likely to answer our desires and comply with our terms, we think it proper for us to put ourselves in readiness so to do. We therefore advise that, according to common custom, there be a committee chosen, of equal numbers from the church and society, to act in concert, whose duty it shall be to look out and engage a suitable person, against the season of trial, as a candidate for our future minister.

"Whether Mr. Hallock shall be dismissed on the day of ordination, as he intimated, or continue as our senior pastor, we do not advise, but submit for future consideration, particularly wishing, however, that the feelings and desires of the two ministers, the present pastor and his successor, may be consulted and complied with.

"As to the pecuniary proposals, which he has made, we consider them as liberal in the extreme. "In cases like this," as he says, "it is not uncommon that the town make some provision for the support of the worn out pastor." This they generally do, either by

continuing a part of his salary during his life, or by making him a generous donation at the time of his dismission. But Mr. Hallock asks so such provision of us: Indeed, he claims nothing, but barely says, "If you should please, by legal vote, to commit to my disposal as my own property the pew, which my family occupy, or some other as valuable, and also to exempt me and the little property I may possess from all kinds of taxation during my life, it will be thankfully accepted."

"To the granting of these favors and more than these, should it be necessary to his or his family's comfort, we are confident there cannot be a dissenting voice in town.

JAMES RICHARDS,
ROBERT BEALS,
ERASTUS BATES,
JOSHUA REED,
JOHN PACKARD,
JOHN MACK,
JOSIAH SHAW, junior,
} *Committee.*

Plainfield, April 6, 1829."

This year the meeting house was painted anew; the outside white, and the inside, except the pews, of a beautiful cream color. The pulpit was rebuilt by subscription in the modern style; curtains of bombazet were furnished for the window, and the pulpit dressed with damask fringed with rich and elegant drapery, all of red, by John Mack, esquire. The house now makes a handsome appearance; indeed, it is believed that few churches, erected forty years since, discover so good a taste, or are, in all respects, so convenient.

July 2, 1830, the following resolution was adopted by the church, "that the practice of dressing in mourning for the loss of friends is needless."

March 1, 1830, the town voted to raise one hundred dollars to hire a candidate. After hearing one candidate, who, on account of infirm health, was not invited to settle, the Reverend David Kimball preached here on probation; and, on the twenty-fifth of October, the town voted, by a majority of 79 to 9, to invite him to settle with them in the work of the ministry, with a salary of 400 dollars a year. The church passed a similar vote, November 1, and "a call was forwarded to Mr. Kimball, and an answer received, signifying his acceptance."

March 1, 1831, a council, of which the Reverend Jonathan L. Pomeroy of Worthington acted as moderator, was convened, and voted to proceed to installation the next day. The installation took place accordingly: The hundred and thirty-second psalm was read, and the introductory prayer offered by the Reverend Henry B. Holmes of Goshen; sermon, by the Reverend Thomas Shephard of Ashfield, from this text in Exodus, "Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened to me; how then shall Pharaoh hear me?" installation prayer, by the Reverend Jonathan Grout of Hawley; charge to the pastor, by the senior pastor; right hand of fellowship, by the Reverend Roswell Hawks of Cummington; charge to the people, by the Reverend Jonathan L. Pomeroy; concluding prayer, by the Reverend Benjamin F. Clarke of Buckland.

The Reverend David Kimball was born at Hopkinton, New Hampshire, March 18, 1791, and educated at Yale College, the usual honors of which he received in 1818 and 1821. He studied divinity at Andover, and was ordained over the societies in Martinsburg and Lowville, New York, June 29, 1822, and dismissed at his own request, October 17, 1830.

November 6, 1831, 21 persons were admitted to the church, a protracted meeting having been held some time before.

The present number of communicants it is difficult to ascertain, as the members are not always careful to remove their relations with their residence. It is supposed to be nearly 200.

Deacons.

Chosen,

November 15, 1792, John Packard, died September 28, 1807, aged 71;

November 15, 1792, James Richards;

April 29, 1803, Joseph Beals, died July 20, 1813, aged 61;

September 23, 1813, Robert Beals;

June 27, 1828, Erastus Bates, removed to Ohio, May, 1834.

Baptist Society.

A Baptist society was formed in the eastern part of the town, February 25, 1833, the first meeting being called by Asa Thayer under a warrant from Nehemiah Richards, esquire, of Cummington.

The church was organized June 18, 1833, by an ecclesiastical council, Elder David Wright of Cummington acting as moderator.

"*Articles of Faith and Practice.*

"Article 1. We believe that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were written by inspiration of God, and are the only rule of faith and practice.

"2. We believe that there is but one only living and true God, revealed in the scriptures as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, who are the same in essence, power and glory; and that he exercises a particular providence over all beings and things.

"3. We believe that the first Adam was created perfect, but, by his disobedience to the law of his Creator, himself and all his posterity became sinners, and possess a depraved nature, disinclined to doing good, and prone to choose and delight in evil; whence the absolute necessity of regeneration, which can be effected only by almighty power.

"4. We believe that God from eternity purposed the salvation of sinners by the incarnation, obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension and intercession of his beloved Son, who, in the fulness of time, really assumed human nature; and so being truly God and truly man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man, by the sacrifice of himself made suitable atonement for sin, "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

"5. We believe that the Holy Spirit applies the benefits of Christ's atonement, by convincing us of our sin and misery, renewing our wills, revealing the glory and ability of Christ to save, and persuading and enabling us to embrace Christ as he is freely offered in the gospel, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

"6. We believe that all, who are chosen by the Father, and redeemed by the Son, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, will certainly and finally persevere in faith, obedience and holiness by grace unto eternal life.

"7. We believe that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both the just and unjust, and that Christ will come a second time, to judge the world in righteousness, when he will punish the wicked

with everlasting destruction, and introduce the saints into his kingdom of glory to be forever with him.

"8. We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's day or Christian sabbath, and that it is our duty to assemble on that day for the worship of God in the various exercises of Christian devotion.

"9. We believe that a visible church of Christ is a number of believers, who have covenanted to maintain together the worship, doctrine, institutions and duties of the gospel of Christ.

"10. We believe that baptism and the Lord's supper are the special ordinances of Christ's church, to be continued until his second coming; and that those only are to be admitted to the communion of the church, and to participate in all its privileges, who, upon the profession of their faith, have been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

"11. We believe that a church of Christ is an independent body, having full power to receive, discipline, dismiss and expel its own members, to elect and dismiss its own officers, and to manage its own concerns according to the scriptures, and that councils and associations have only advisory powers.

"12. We believe that the only permanent officers of the church are elders or pastors and deacons; that the pastor is to preach the word, to administer baptism and the Lord's supper, to oversee the church, and to preside in discipline; and that he is to be highly esteemed in love for his work's sake, and liberally and voluntarily supplied with carnal things according to the respective ability of the members;—and that the deacons are to oversee and manage the temporals of the church.

"*Church Covenant.*

"Having been baptized, upon the profession of our faith, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of the heart searching God, and in the presence of these witnesses, voluntarily devote ourselves to God according to the gospel of his Son, and to this church as members of it, receiving its articles of faith and practice as agreeable to the word of God, and promising to adhere to them in sentiment and practice, and to submit to the discipline of the church, so long as we continue satisfied that they are scriptural.

"We likewise engage to attend public worship statedly with this church, so far as may be consistent with duty, and endeavor to bring up our families in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and also to attend church meetings and conferences, and all other appointments of the church, whenever it is practicable.

"Moreover, we esteem it our duty to walk in wisdom towards them, that are without, and to cultivate brotherly love among ourselves;—to watch over, exhort, sympathize with and pray for each other;—to bear with one another's failings and infirmities, and, when the case requires, to warn, rebuke and admonish one another, according to the gospel.

"And may the God of all grace enable us always to keep in mind our present engagements, so long as we are continued in this church; and may he still add unto it of such as shall be saved.

"'"Now unto him, that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."'"

The number of church members is 22. The meetings of the society are commonly held in the brick schoolhouse.

Deacons.

Chosen,
August, 1833, Asa Thayer;
August, 1833, Jeremiah Stockwell, junior.

NOTICE OF THE MOUNTAIN MILLER, AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE, BY WILLIAM A. HALLOCK.

Deacon Joseph Beals, who will be known, through the future ages of the church, as the Mountain Miller, was a native of Bridgewater in this state, and removed with his family to this place in 1779. Here, in 1789, a year of great scarcity, he met with a severe affliction, the loss of his house and nearly all his provisions by fire. Previous to this, he had been depending on his external morality for salvation, considering a change of heart as unnecessary. He now found, however, that he could not truly submit to the will of God, and betook himself to the seeking of his salvation in earnest. After a season of distressing anxiety, the

Savior was pleased to reveal himself to his soul as the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, and "he suddenly broke forth in new strains of devotion, penitence and praise for redeeming love." From this time he consecrated himself to the service of his Savior, and became distinguished for his meekness and humility, his life of prayer, his exemplary deportment at all times, and in all places, particularly in the house of God, his abiding sense of the uncertainty of life and the retributions of eternity, his preciousness to the awakened sinner, his care for the spiritual welfare of his family, and of all, with whom the providence of God brought him in contact, his perseverance in doing good, and his uniform and consistent piety. "His conversation would never tire, and it seemed that he was never tired of religious conversation."

He died after a short sickness, July 20, 1813. "His body," says the writer of the tract, "was interred in the graveyard, near his accustomed place of worship, where a plain and neat marble slab, bearing his name, age and the date of his death, is erected as the only memorial of the Mountain Miller. A notice of his death was inserted in the county newspaper, with this expressive and appropriate remark; "His presence animated the Christian, and awed the sinner;" which would have been his whole recorded story, had not some special indications of providence convinced the writer of this narrative of his duty to communicate it for the benefit, he trusts, of thousands."

The pious traveler will hereafter delight to visit the place consecrated by the residence of the Mountain Miller, to drink at the spring by the road side, bursting from the rocks, and shaded by the two beautiful sugar maples, where he so often drank in passing between his house and mill, and, above all, to linger at the grave of this devoted servant of the Most High. From this spot flowers have already been culled, and sent to different parts of this country and of Europe.

This tract, which now takes its place by the side of the Dairyman's Daughter and the Shepherd of Salisbury Plain, was first published by the American Tract Society in 1831. Within one year 140,000 copies were printed, and the whole impression amounted to 168,000. In 1833 the tract was carefully revised, and stereotyped anew, and another edition of 168,000 copies was struck off.

In the Seventh and Eighth Reports of the society the following instances are given of its usefulness.

"It was presented to a family in humble circumstances in Connecticut. The wife read it, and, while perusing the last page, became deeply affected with her lost and ruined state as a sinner. Her convictions were pungent and distressing; and, in two or three days, she was rejoicing in hope. This so affected her husband, that he too became alarmed, and soon found peace in Christ. They sent for the minister of the place, and communicated to him the grateful news of what God had done for their souls. They had rarely attended public worship;—the husband had kept a tippling shop, which is now closed, and the business relinquished entirely."

"A distributer in New Jersey called on an aged man, who had never read a tract, and said he did not need nor wish to read one. He was induced, however, to accept the Mountain Miller. He was not only interested in reading it, but his mind became seriously alarmed. He saw that his morality, in which he trusted, could not save him, and that he needed a better righteousness than his own, and he now trusts that he has found mercy with God through him, who was crucified."

In the American Tract Magazine for February, 1834, is the following testimony from Mr. Morley of Union College. "In one family," says he, "I left the Mountain Miller. Four weeks after, I called again, and it had been read by twenty families, and was still circulating. As soon as one family had read it, another was anxious to receive it. It was recently read at a prayer meeting, and the whole audience were affected to tears. In a number of families where it was read, it had a similar effect. It has been the instrument of arousing many professors, and awakening a number of the careless from their long slumbers in sin."

The same society has also published the tract in the German language. It has also been reprinted by the Religious Tract Society of London; and in France it has been translated and published in the language of the country by the Religious Tract Society of Paris.

The author received 50 dollars for writing this tract; (presented to the American Tract Society, to be given as a prize for the best narrative tract.) This sum he generously devoted for the purpose of perpetuating the tract.

BENEVOLENT SOCIETIES.

Plainfield Tract Society. This society, which was formed several years since, lately became auxiliary to the American Tract Society at New York.

Foreign Missionary Association of Plainfield, subsidiary to the Foreign Missionary Society of Northampton and the Neighboring Towns, formed in 1824.

Bible Association of Plainfield, auxiliary to the Hampshire Bible Society, formed in 1826. In the grand effort for supplying the United States with Bibles, a few years since, this society paid more than a hundred dollars.

Temperance Association of Plainfield, auxiliary to the Hampshire County Temperance Society. This flourishing society was formed June 27, 1828, and now consists of about 500 members, none being admitted under 12 years of age. The inhabitants have great reason to felicitate themselves on the progress of the temperperance cause among them. Though this was never considered an intemperate place, when compared with its sister towns, yet, a few years since, there were six licensed houses, and, at the principal store, there were sold 12 hogsheads of ardent spirits in a year. Now there are but two licensed houses; and, at the same store, there is sold about a barrel in the same period of time. The number of intemperate persons is greatly diminished; and there is an improvement in the manners and morals of the people, which is truly gratifying.

Home Missionary Association of Plainfield, auxiliary to the Hampshire Missionary Society, formed in 1831.

Female Benevolent Society, formed May 14, 1833.

Maternal Association of Plainfield, formed May 2, 1834.

There are resident in this place two directors for life, and one life member of the American Bible Society, two life members of the American Home Missionary Society, a member for life of the the American Society for Meliorating the Condition of the Jews, and a life director and eight life members of the American Tract Society at New York.

FIRES.

Joseph Beals's house was burnt, February, 1789.

About the beginning of the year 1819, the house of Benjamin

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Gardner, junior, and Warren Gardner was consumed by fire.

April 22, 1824, Ira Hamlin's house, including a hat manufactory, was burnt.

February, 1825, the cloth manufactory, belonging to Arnold and Nahum Streeter, was consumed by fire.

December 13, 1833, the house of Stallham Rice was burnt with all its contents, the family being absent.

Four schoolhouses have been destroyed by fire, the last on the third of December, 1833. Two of these were in the north-east district. There have also been burnt four mechanics' shops and a small distillery.

The necessities of those, who have suffered by fire, have been liberally supplied, and their losses, in a good degree, compensated by the kindness of the people. Very few of the inhabitants have availed themselves of the benefits of the insurance office, five buildings only being insured.

The houses are generally of wood; in a few instances of brick, with underpinning and window caps and sills of West Stockbridge marble.

INCIDENTS.

Not long after the erecting of the bellfry, as some fellows were playing around the meeting house, one of them, having a plentiful scarcity of wit, threw up a stone, which struck the cock, which is placed as a vane on the summit of the spire, and bent his tailfeathers. His comrades told him that he would be put to death, unless he went up and straitened them. In this dilemma, he climbed up by the lightning rod as far as the bell, where he rested a while, and then ascended to the vane, and, after effecting his purpose, returned without meeting with any accident.

In June, 1829, as captain Levi Cook was engaged in shoeing a yoke of oxen, one of the animals being fastened by a chain to a staple, in attempting to extricate himself, pulled out the staple, and, in doing this, threw the chain around the legs of the unfortunate man, the hook hitching into one of the links; and, in this situation, he was drawn with great velocity about half a mile. The ox was then stopped by a boy, and the unhappy man extricated himself from his truly perilous situation. His body was severely mangled; but, after a tedious confinement, he recovered.

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